

Message Text

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17

ACTION XMB-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 DOTE-00 SP-02 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2624

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BPRO

SUBJ: FCIA XXX CREDIT INSURANCE REQUEST TO COVER SALE OF 60
LOCOMOTIVES TO PLAN ORGANIZATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN

REF: A. STATE 48791 B. ANKARA '75 7916

1. EMBASSY HAS REPEATED STATE 48791 TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN FOR APPROPRIATE ACTION.
2. EMBASSY ANKARA UNAWARE OF BACKGROUND ON SALE OF 60 LOCOMOTIVES TO IRAN AND HOW THIS WOULD AFFECT RAIL TRAFFIC IN TURKEY. ARE WE CORRECT IN ASSUMING THAT SOME OF THESE LOCOMOTIVES MAY BE SENT BY GOI TO TURKEY AS PART OF \$1.2 BILLION FRAME AGREEMENT SIGNED IN ANKARA IN OCTOBER 1975? (ANKARA 7916). EMBASSY NOTES THAT GOI SAID IT WAS READY AT THAT TIME TO EXTEND LOAN TO SUPPLY TURKEY WITH MORE POWERFUL LOCOMOTIVES TO IMPROVE TRANSIT CAPABILITIES OF IRAN-TURKEY RAIL TRANSIT. IRAN ALSO PROFESSED READINESS IN THE AGREEMENT TO FINANCE PURCHASE OF ADDITIONAL FERRIES FOR USE ON LAKE VAN AND IN LONGER-TERM CREDIT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF TAT-VAN RAIL LINK WHICH WOULD OBVIATE NEED FOR RAIL FERRY SERVICE.

3. WE UNDERSTAND THAT MAIN DETERENT TO SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN RAIL FREIGHT VOLUME ACROSS TURKEY TO IRAN IS CAUSED BY BOTTLENECK AT LAKE VAN. OTHER PROBLEMS ARE INBALANCE OF RAIL CARS (TOO

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MANY END UP IN IRAN) AND NEED FOR TURKEY TO HAVE MORE POWERFUL

LOCOMOTIVES TO PULL HEAVIER TRAINS. GOT ALSO HAS PLANS FOR SOME ADDITIONAL DOUBLE-TRACKING WHICH MIGHT BE NECESSARY IN PROGRAM TO INCREASE RAIL VOLUME ACROSS TURKEY. THUS, USE OF MORE POWERFUL LOCOMOTIVES IN AND OF ITSELF WOULD NOT SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE FREIGHT VOLUME ON TURKEY-IRAN CENTO RAILWAY UNLESS VAN BOTTLENECK CAN BE EASED. HOWEVER, STEPS TO THIS END ARE INCLUDED UNDER TERMS OF FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT.

4. LAKE VAN PROBLEM HAS BEEN DISCUSSED AND STUDIED AT LENGTH DURING PAST TEN YEARS IN CENTO FORUM. EX-IM MIGHT WISH TO CONTACT CENTO ECONOMIC OFFICE IN WASHINGTON FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

5. EMBASSY PERCEIVES NO POLITICAL OBJECTION TO ABOVE SALE. IMPROVEMENT OF TURKISH STRANSIT FACILITIES WOULD BENEFIT TURKISH ECONOMY AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNING CAPABILITY. POLITICALLY, IMPORVEMENT OF TURKEY-IRAN RELATIONS SUCH AS FORESEEN IN IRAN-TURKEY FRAME AGREEMENT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT U.S. RELATIONS WITH EITHER COUNTRY.
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